

warily. Suddenly the cobra made a break for it and darted up the opposite slope of the ditch and disappeared with the lizard in hot pursuit. I do not know what followed. The whole scene was watched from about fifteen feet and lasted three or four minutes.

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15. STRIKING BEHAVIOUR IN THE COMMON GREEN WHIP SNAKE (*AHAETULLA NASUTUS*)

In a recent contribution in this *Journal* (67:113; 1970) Romulus Whitaker noted the effects of *Ahaetulla nasutus* bite. I have several times been bitten by Thailand specimens of this snake, with symptoms of bleeding, itchiness, and only slight swelling deriving exactly as those described by Mr. Whitaker. Several individuals made feinting lunges, although one struck and bit with such determination that it required my aid to free its teeth from my hand. My own experience also confirms M. Smith's statement (1943, FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA Reptilia and Amphibia 3) that, 'when handled it has the peculiar habit of watching one's face and suddenly making a dart at it, aiming usually for the eyes.' The snake is called 'Eye Snake' in parts of its range.

Ahaetulla nasutus has from birth a propensity for striking. On 8 June 1962, in Bangkok, I caught a 65 inch long female, which soon gave birth to eleven young, of which two did not survive birth. Each of these was about ten inches long. Immediately after birth the young were very active, striking at each other and at me.

I noted that specimens of the less common *Ahaetulla prasinus* from southern Thailand were, as a rule, more prone to strike than *Ahaetulla nasutus*. The former were remarkable for the rapidity with which they would whip into the 'S'-shaped striking posture, inflate the neck to reveal the black and white interstitial pattern, flicker the tongue, hiss, and rapidly vibrate the tail. I saw several individuals so excited strike at inorganic objects; one, turning and seeing its own tail vibrating, struck at it!

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